

This year's festivities will take place on July 15, 2001.

Under its Founder and President, Felipe Febles the parade has grown in size and splendor. It now brings together an increasing number of participants from all five New York City boroughs and beyond. I also would like to recognize all the people who, under the leadership of Director Rosa Ayala, are making sure that this year's events will be successful as in the past.

On Sunday, July 15, thousands of members and friends of the Dominican community will march from Mt. Eden and 172nd Street to East 161st Street and the Grand Concourse in celebration of their Dominican heritage and their achievements in this nation. Among other accomplishments, Dominicans have been instrumental in transforming New York City into a great bilingual city. Moreover, the parade has served as a national landmark in which people from all ethnic groups unite to commemorate our Nation's glorious immigrant history.

Mr. Speaker, the Board of Directors of the Dominican Parade of the Bronx has chosen me to be their "International Godfather" and I have gladly and humbly accepted that honor.

As one who has participated in the parade in the past, I can attest that the excitement it generates brings the entire City together. It is a celebration and an affirmation of life. It feels wonderful to enable so many people to have this experience—one that will change the lives of many of them.

The event will feature a wide variety of entertainment for all age groups. This year's festival includes the performance of Merengue and Salsa bands, crafts exhibitions, and food typical of the Dominican Republic.

Mr. Speaker, it is with enthusiasm that I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to this wonderful celebration of Dominican culture, which has brought much pride to the Bronx community.

IN RECOGNITION OF MT. ROSE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 11, 2001

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 11th Annual Founder's Day celebration of the Mt. Rose Church of God In Christ and the ground breaking ceremony of their new facility.

The Mt. Rose Church of God was founded in 1944 and is located in Barrett Station, Texas. Though located in Barrett Station, the ministry performed at Mt. Rose Church of God In Christ is felt throughout the greater Houston area. The goal of Mt. Rose Church of God In Christ is to create "The City of Refuge." A place where the vision of salvation, deliverance, Christian maturity, and support are shared; a place where the doors are always open to those enduring hardships.

The prayerful and Spirit-filled members of Mt. Rose Church of God In Christ have come to the aid of the community in need time and time again. Through their compassionate offer-

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ings, these leaders have enhanced the lives of the entire community. Their actions provide a flicker of hope to individuals who were otherwise in despair.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the members of Mt. Rose Church of God In Christ and in particular Pastor Elder Ron Eagleton, whose passionate and dedicated leadership has borne the commitment to service that is so much a part of this congregation.

The 11th Annual Founder's Day Celebration on Sunday, July 15, 2001, is especially significant because it also marks the ground breaking of the new 43,000 square foot facility to be completed next year. The new sanctuary will seat 1,100 people and the facility will house the more than 20 ministries of Mt. Rose Church of God In Christ. In addition, it will also include a gymnasium for recreational activities.

Mr. Speaker, as Mt. Rose Church of God In Christ continues to grow in size and members, I applaud their efforts to embrace the community of Harris County. Their work sets an example for the entire community to follow.

MEDICARE EDUCATION AND REGULATORY FAIRNESS ACT OF 2001

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 11, 2001

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to preface my comments by saying that Medicare is a wonderful program. Since the enactment of Medicare in 1965, seniors and disabled individuals have had better access to physicians and more access to life-saving treatments. And in comparison to managed care, Medicare is also extremely cost-effective. It's an under-appreciated fact that Medicare is administered for just two cents on the dollar, while managed care is typically administered at a rate twelve times greater.

Still, it's absolutely amazing how much bureaucratic red tape you can generate for two cents on the dollar. This is 500 sheets of paper. If you write double-sided, it's 1000 pages. Now, if you imagine 110 of these stacks piled on top of each other, you begin to have an idea of how complicated Medicare is. 110,000 pages of regulations—that's over three times the length of the U.S. tax code.

Every month, physicians receive pages upon pages from their Medicare carriers describing ever-changing policies and regulations. Keeping track of everything is frankly impossible. Yet, if a physician doesn't follow one of the rules, no matter how unintentionally, he or she can be subjected to the draconian process of a Medicare audit. Currently, when carriers identify an alleged physician billing error, they can "extrapolate" the single identified error to the physician's other claims. This would be like the IRS identifying an error on your most recent tax return, and then assuming that you made that error on every tax return you ever filed.

The "Medicare Education and Regulatory Fairness Act of 2001" is a common-sense piece of legislation that addresses this injustice, as well as many others. This act will guarantee that physicians receive the same

due process that we guarantee all our citizens. If this alone were the only virtue of this bill, it would still be worth passing. But there is a larger significance here that extends beyond physicians, and it can be summarized with a simple equation: Less time spent on paperwork means more time spent on patient care. Therefore, as much as physicians will benefit from this legislation, let us always keep in mind that the true beneficiaries are the patients.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO ALLOW FEDERAL CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES TO RETAIN FRE- QUENT FLYER MILES THEY RE- CEIVE WHILE TRAVELING ON OF- FICIAL GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 11, 2001

Mr. BURTON. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill that would assist federal departments and agencies in their efforts to recruit and retain employees. This bill would allow federal civilian employees to keep frequent flyer miles and other promotional benefits they receive while traveling on official government business. Unlike private-sector employees, federal workers are currently prohibited by law from keeping these benefits for personal use.

The existing law, enacted in 1994, intended to save the government money. However, the law has been difficult to implement because the airlines regard frequent flyer miles as belonging to the individual traveler and are generally unwilling to create separate official and personal frequent flyer accounts for the same individual. Overall, the burdens and costs of administering this program have limited its benefits to the government.

The private sector commonly allows its employees to keep the frequent flyer miles they receive while on business travel, giving private companies, including government contractors, a competitive edge over federal agencies in attracting and retaining skilled employees. Changing this policy would help level the playing field.

However, in order for federal employees to keep these benefits, the bill would require that they be obtained under the same terms as provided to the general public and must be at no additional cost to the government. Frequent flyer miles that are accrued during employees' official travel will also help compensate employees for the sacrifices and frustrations often associated with air travel. Similar to private-sector employees, federal employees must often travel on their personal time to meet work schedules.

This is just one small step to help counteract the effects of the expected retirements in the federal workforce in the coming years, and it would help the government compete for top-quality employees.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation.